Man verily is formed of desire; as his desire is, so is his will; as his will is, so he works; and whatever work he does, in the likeness of it he grows. —*The Upanishads*

THEOSOPHY

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THE BASIS OF THE MOVEMENT

IN a time of accelerating karmic action, retributive ills are mixed with emerging opportunities, and the making of history seems less of a hidden process, far-reaching changes being acted out within the sight of all. These changes are accompanied by insistent questioning of moral issues, and large masses of men are pressed into making decisions which a less troubled past made it possible to ignore.

Yet is there, actually, a great deal more of "choosing" during such periods of excitement and disturbance? To what extent, it may be asked, are such fateful decisions only summations, now openly made, of the consequences of heretofore concealed moral attitudes and positions? Historical "events," after all, do not define causes so much as precipitated effects; for what can become visible is only the already shaped, even the "finished," from the viewpoint of human or moral reality. Those with some instruction in the law of cycles will seek the meaning of history in tendencies and movements of mind often remote from the external "ripple of effects." They will find both warnings and encouragement at those levels of being where men habitually identify what they deem "reality" and locate the things upon which their hearts are set.

Students of Theosophy have this counsel from H. P. Blavatsky:

> The doctrines of Theosophy, if seriously studied, call forth, by stimulating one's reasoning powers and awakening the inner in the animal man, every hitherto dormant power for good in

us, and also the perception of the true and the real, as opposed to the false and the unreal.

The Theosophical Movement, as Robert Crosbie never tired of affirming, is based upon unity, study, and work. The unity illustrates man's capacity to overcome the many-faceted illusion of separateness, to disregard the misleading appearance that human interests are divided and opposed. Determined practice of unity brings needed experience in the application of the virtues—of patience, and of consideration for and acceptance of others. Yet unity is almost impossible to maintain without growth in knowledge. Only the unity which comes from understanding of differences can endure the testings of time. Study is for this reason indispensable. For virtues may imperceptibly alter into sectarian vanities without continuous, mind-stretching consideration of the evolutionary end in view. Patience in others may be read as indifference unless there is ardent inquiry into the true nature of human beings, and appreciation of the complex processes upon which growth and progress depend. Study of the doctrines of Theosophy has a liberating effect in respect to the engrossing preoccupations of sense existence. It results in giving less and less feeling or spontaneous allegiance to the "appearance" side of life. Study leads naturally to control of the tendency to impulsive judgment of others. Slowly, by degrees, it releases the mind from the level of merely personal responses, establishing, by minute increments, another spontaneity—that belonging to the incarnated soul beginning to recognize its own eternal nature, even while confined in a body. This is a process which, once it acquires self-energizing momentum, will continue until the soul is indeed the ruling principle, has become a victorious Arjuna. The aspirant will also realize, if he is a faithful *student,* that this is a process which will occupy him for perhaps many lives, and he will acquire, along with patience towards others, some patience with himself.

Work is the means by which the strength necessary to self-reliance is gained and through which, also, the student tests his knowledge, learning to distinguish between what he knows and what he hopefully believes. This is essential to recognizing the working necessity of patience, and to understanding and consideration for others. Preserving the delicate balance between self-reliance and cooperation with others is the only means of scotching sectarian tendencies, which by no means take flight because some

erring humans have made up their minds to accept the truth of the Wisdom-Religion.

Through unity, study, and work the student comes to see that the lessons which he consciously pursues are indeed the same lessons that, in ways however obscure and at rates however various, are pursued by all men. The *coherence* of all this learning, as a comprehensive reality and the true meaning of human life, he has become aware of through contact with Theosophy. Hence his gratitude and his commitment to the work of the Theosophical Movement. This is his Ariadne's thread, his golden key, his pearl of great price. Even a little of this practice, he comes to learn from experience, delivers a man from great risk.

The practice of unity may sometimes seem beyond the scope of his control. Lacking wisdom, and feeling this inadequacy, he suspects that he cannot summon instruction by a strenuous act of the will. What he can and must demand of himself is lack of pretense in trying. Meanwhile opportunities for what seem effective work, while they always exist in some way, are also matters of Karma. High opportunities for service grow with small ones recognized and taken, preparatory disciplines willingly accepted. But study can always be pursued. It is, in a sense, the *easiest* of his obligations. And from persistent study come those consequences spoken of by H.P.B., making unity a natural expression, and work a joy.

These are realizations which must some day be seen by all the world. One who seeks them now, consciously and as best he can, helps all the world.

letters • questions • comment

Our chaotic society seems totally lacking in guidelines which would encourage orderly growth, yet we must live in it and be a part of it to some extent, since we belong to the race. How can the theosophical philosophy help us to cope with this society intelligently?

It does seem that rapidly changing confusion is an evident characteristic of our times. And for those whose mental and psychic "center of gravity" is on the plane of effects, these changes bring an ever mounting desperation as familiar and trusted forms are cast away by increasing numbers of people as empty or inadequate, while perceptive individuals seek vainly for a solution to fill the void. But it seems that without the long-range perspective of cycles and the doctrine of the inherent perfectibility of man, no rational explanation is possible, and only a stubborn intuition, possessed by a few, will support faith in the future. To try to ameliorate visible effects without a vision of the future, which, like the Aswattha tree, has its roots in the spiritual apex of the cycle of evolution, is to engage but the shadow of reality.

Yet, paradoxically, the real must somehow be manifesting in all these effects. The thread of transcendent reality should sometimes be discernible within the maze of events, so that, among those elements which appear to be chaotic, lines of action consistent with the nature of permanence can be recognized and used as a bridge to better times.

One may be helped to see such lines by the light of Theosophy.

The idea of cycles, of the ceaseless ebb and flow of life, suggests that if effects must run their course, we may nevertheless try to determine the motivation behind them and to see their play in relation to the corresponding levels of action and reaction represented by the sevenfold nature of man. If one considers that the characteristic of a cycle of any kind is oscillation between two extremes, it becomes apparent that a mid-point of stable equilibrium exists, and with the repetition of the cycles this point moves along an ascending line. This line might also represent the *locus* of illumination

where one can see the meaning of the cycle broadly reflecting the spiritual progress of mankind, or some part of it. Thus, those who grasp the idea of cycles may be able to maintain, from one oscillation to another, or from one age to another, the faith or even the knowledge of this meaning—as an effort to manifest on this plane of matter whatever is possible of the inherent perfectibility of man. The practicality of this attempt is evident from a statement in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 644):

> Karma-Nemesis is no more than the (spiritual) dynamical effect of causes produced and forces awakened into activity by our own actions. It is a law of occult dynamics that "a given amount of energy expended on the spiritual or astral plane is productive of far greater results than the same amount expended on the physical objective plane of existence."

But in our excessively intellectual and verbal society, so much is written about what is happening that the keys to its meaning are obscured by the blizzard of words. How then is one to define reality so as to recognize it? It seems that one sort of perception whose fitness or applicability is unlimited by either space or time is simply concern for others, or, as *The Voice of the Silence* puts it, "Compassion absolute." It is this quality, capable of expression in however slight degree by all men, whatever their station in life, which would provide a unifying common ground for all the acts which can be of lasting value to the race. For only this concern can lead to awareness of those acts which, when done, will leave behind an efflorescence of goodwill and understanding, spreading the concern which conceived it as the seed of future communications.

Although without inspired leadership or uplifting faith in wise tradition, our society is nevertheless authoritarian in a subtle way. The tendency is still to look for some leader or expert to accept responsibility for our actions, especially those that turn out badly. It requires some perception beyond the reach of momentary events for individuals to accept responsibility in a constructive sense.

In her article *The Fall of Ideals,* H. P. Blavatsky uses Victor Hugo's Satan to illustrate the mystery of human evolution out of chaos:

> Byron never thought of vivifying his Archangel with that undying spark of love which forms—nay, *must* form the essence of the "First-Born" out of the homogeneous essence of eternal Harmony and Light, and is the element of forgiving reconciliation, even in its (according to our philosophy) last terrestrial off-

spring—Humanity. Discord is the concomitant of differentiation, and Satan being an evolution, must in that sense, be an adversary, a contrast, being a type of Chaotic matter. The loving essence cannot be extinguished but only perverted. Without this saving redemptive power, embodied in Satan, he simply appears the nonsensical failure of omnipotent and omniscient imbecility which the opponents of theological Christianity sneeringly and very justly make him: with it he becomes a thinkable Entity, the *Asuras* of the Puranic myths, the first *breaths* of Brahma, who, after fighting the gods and defeating them are finally themselves defeated and then hurled on to the earth where they incarnate in Humanity. Thus Satanic Humanity becomes comprehensible. After moving around his cycle of obstacles he may, with accumulated experiences, after all the throes of Humanity, emerge again into the light—as Eastern philosophy teaches.

Again, Satan as the "heart-broken, hopeless, embittered portion of humanity in their collectivity," becomes something far more compelling than the simple personification of evil. He becomes the vital force which impels humanity towards its potential godhood, remote as its realization may be. His struggle typifies the fact that only under conditions of suffering and disillusionment are most people able to see through the subtle confinements of material existence and reach toward more enduring bonds of brotherhood. In H.P.B.'s words:

The whole conception is an efflorescence of metaphysical ideality. This white lotus of thought springs now, as in former ages, from the rottenness of the world of matter, generating *Protest* and LIBERTY. It is springing in our very midst and under our very eyes, from the mire of modern civilization, fecund bed of contrasting virtues. In this foul soil sprouted the germs which ultimately developed into All-denying protestators, Atheists, Nihilists, and Anarchists, men of the Terror. Bad, violent, criminal some of them may be, yet no one of them could stand as the copy of Satan; but taking this heart-broken, hopeless, embittered portion of humanity in their collectivity, they are just Satan himself; for he is the ideal synthesis of all discordant forces and each separate human vice or passion is but an atom of his totality. In the very depths of the heart of this Human Satanic totality burns the divine spark, all negations notwithstanding. It is called LOVE FOR HUMANITY, an ardent aspiration for a universal reign of Justice—hence a latent desire for light, harmony and goodness. Where do we find such a divine spark among the proud and the wealthy? In respectable Society and the correct orthodox, so called religious portion of the public, one finds but a predominating feeling of selfishness and a desire for wealth at

> the expense of the weak and the destitute, hence as a parallel, indifference to injustice and evil. Before Satan, the incarnate Protest, repents and reunites with his fellow men in one common Brotherhood, all cause for protest must have disappeared from earth. And that can come to pass only when Greed, Bias, and Prejudice shall have disappeared before the elements of Altruism and Justice to all. Freedom, or Liberty, is but a vain word just now all over the civilized globe; freedom is but a cunning synonym for oppression of the people in the name of the people, and it exists for castes, never for units. To bring about the reign of Freedom as contemplated by Hugo's Satan, the "Angel Liberty" has to be born simultaneously and by common love and consent of the "higher" wealthy caste, and the "lower" classes —the poor; in other words, to become the progeny of "God" and "Satan," thereby reconciling the two.

Theosophical philosophy can be seen to encourage the vision which will finally guide the efforts of present century humanity to unite these two.

H.P.B. concludes her article with a brief paragraph concerning the false religious ideas which must be cleared away before this reunion can take place. A harmonious social order, she says, will remain only a utopian ideal so long as the minds of men are distorted by the dogmas of orthodoxy. One sees, here, the reason for the insistence, throughout all her work, on a wholly impersonal conception of Deity and on exposure of the intellectual and moral distortions which result when belief in a personal God creates allegiances neglecting the Brotherhood of Man.

Much of Western history may be recognized as a long catalog of crimes committed in the name of "duty to God" and the preservation or spread of the "one true faith." Indeed, the entire cycle of modern materialism may be regarded as a direct consequence of the abuse of the religious instinct—to the point where "all-denying protestators and atheists" could find sufficient followers to turn ruthless power against the advocates of traditional faiths. One senses, here, the terrible meaning of the phrase, "deformation of the intellectual principle," and sees something of the historical consequences involved. The doctrine of the One Self, on which all human brotherhood must be based, needs the breadth and depth of open minds before it can take root and grow.

THE DOCETAE

THE cornerstone of Christian theology, the awesome event upon which hinges the entire impact of Church doctrine, is the actual *physical* death of Jesus Christ upon the Cross of Calvary. Except for the passion and death of the Saviour, there could be no remission of sins for the wayward, no hope of salvation for the faithful, no promise of resurrection for the dead. In spite of the mystery that surrounded this fateful episode of religious history, the Master, say the authorities, actually experienced *physical death,* and in so doing conquered the very "sting of death" itself.

But few people, and Christians perhaps least of all, know that, beginning almost immediately after the crucifixion, a heated controversy arose over this very question, and raged for centuries. There was a large and influential body of early Christians who maintained that Christ *did not die,* nor could he actually suffer physical death, since his embodiment, these people held, was not of human flesh and blood in the way of ordinary man, but was "spiritual" in character; nor was Christ born of a human mother, for that divine nature could not be polluted by any contact with sinful flesh. Known under the general designation of *Docetae,* or Illusionists, the believers in this doctrine are now referred to as Gnostics—the early philosophic Christians who included in their ranks such learned and saintly men as Valentinus, Marcion, Basilides, and Bardesanes.

Docetae comes from the Greek *dokein,* meaning "to appear," and is defined in Webster's as "an early heretical sect held that Christ's body was merely a phantom, or appearance, or that if real, its substance was spiritual."

It is difficult to trace the origin of *Docetism.* The term first appears in the writings of several of the early Church Fathers, among them Clement of Alexandria, Hippolytus, Serapion of Antioch, and Theodoret. However, St. Jerome said that the teaching had even earlier origins. "The blood of Christ," he maintained, "was still fresh in Judea when His body was said to be a phantasm." In Hastings' *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* (IV, 832-40), Adrian Fortesque points to Simon Magus as "the reputed author

of Docetism, as of all Gnostic theories." "His name," he says, "appears repeatedly as the inventor of this idea; but it is very doubtful how far he is not simply a type to whom all Gnostic developments are traced back." The *Encyclopædia Britannica* goes further, stating that "the origin of the heresy is to be sought in the Greek, Alexandrine and Oriental philosophizing about the imperfection or rather the essential impurity of matter." This latter view seems confirmed by the fact that both Brahman and Buddhist teachings reveal distinctly docetic conceptions.

Whatever its source, Docetism was certainly the first of the so-called Christian "heresies." Differences of opinion about the nature of Jesus' body brought the first major dispute and cleavage within the ranks of early Christians, and there seems to have been little or no ground for reconciliation. It is even possible that Docetism was an issue that set the apostles one against the other. Paul taught that there are several kinds of bodies, "celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial," bodies of the nature of the sun, moon, stars, etc.—a view with docetic implications. And why should John have said (II John 1:7) that "many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh," unless some of his Christian contemporaries were espousing docetic views?

For the church-going believer of today, however, Docetism would almost certainly be a new and strange word; and for all those to whom the Bible, even in its present mutilated form, is still the veritable word of God, the testimony of John, that people holding such views are "deceivers," must settle the issue. Likewise, no doubt, with the majority of present-day priests and preachers, whose articles of faith were long ago formulated for them largely by Irenæus, Tertullian and Augustine. For all such, Docetism is no more than a completely forgotten "error." And the reader may well wonder why we do not leave it forgotten. What value can there be now, in wondering whether the body of someone who lived and died 2000 years ago was material or spiritual?

Yet knowledge of the issue of Docetism is important to the man of today for several reasons—mainly because of its practical bearing on the possibility and means of survival after death. The Christian dogma of *physical* resurrection, based largely upon the supposed physicality of Jesus' body, both before and after the crucifixion, raises various nagging questions. Outraging common sense, this doctrine may have driven more people of perceptive mind away

from the Church, and away from all religious belief, than any other Christian claim. It is prejudicial to any rational faith in immortality, and ought to be re-examined.

Investigation of Docetism is rendered difficult by the fact that few Christians know much about the history of either their Church or their Bible. How many, for example, have ever looked at, much less studied and meditated upon, the so-called apocryphal scriptures? Who except the religious antiquarian is aware of the fact that the rejected Christian gospels contain positive docetic teachings, and that these scriptures were declared uncanonical by certain Church Fathers for this very reason?

There is of course the broader question of how and when the Bible, in its presently accepted compilation, was formed. The curious story of how the early Fathers, unable to agree on which of the scriptures were genuine and which false, went about the business of selecting the canonical gospels is seldom reported. The Christian Church owes its present Bible to a practice known as sortilege, or the casting of lots, sanctified by the Church Fathers as *Sortes Sanctorum.* It is a form of lottery, authority for which is found in Proverbs 16:33, where it is said that "the lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." By this method of divination, now decried by the clergy as an abomination, various weighty matters in the early Church were decided. One form of the *Sortes,* practiced even to this day by some, is to lay the Bible upon the altar or a table, and pray the Lord to make His will known, to disclose futurity in one of the verses of the book. The Bible is then opened at random. The first verse upon which the eye falls is considered to be God's will. The *Sortes* was practiced in the twelfth century in the election of bishops, and even Augustine himself did not "disapprove of this method of learning futurity, provided it be not used for worldly purposes." He confesses to having practiced it himself. (See *The Life of St. Gregory of Tours.*)

At the Council of Nicea, held 325 A.D., 318 bishops, including the Emperor Constantine, were convened. This body chose the books to be included in the Bible. Socrates Scholasticus (385-445) in his History of the Christian Church, quotes Sabinus, the Bishop of Heraclea, as saying that "except Constantine, the emperor, and Eusebius Pamphilus, these bishops were a set of *illiterate,* simple creatures, that understood nothing." (*Eccles. History,* Book 1, Ch. 9.) Such was probably also the opinion of Pappus, who relates that,

having "promiscuously put all the books that were referred to the Council for determination under a communion-table in a church, they [the bishops] besought the Lord that the *inspired* writings might get upon the table, while the spurious ones remained underneath, and *it happened accordingly.*" We are not told, of course, who held the keys to the chamber during the hours of the Lord's miraculous intervention!

For almost sixteen centuries, the resulting selection, commonly known as the Bible, has been regarded by the Christian world as the "unalterable Word of God." And now, in the present century, with publication of the Revised Standard Version in 1953, following earlier versions of 1611, 1881 and 1901, the Sacred Writ has again been re-translated, revised, corrected—whole verses being occasionally clipped away, and in some cases entire chapters. Is this new "revelation" of the twentieth century, one wonders, again to be accepted as the authentic "Word of God" by all but those willing to be branded as infidels? Or should one continue to declare loyalty to the King James Version, or the Douay Version, despite knowing that these, too, are revisions of still earlier versions?

It is of more than incidental interest that neither Jesus nor his disciples—and not even the Church Fathers—ever used the term *Bible* in connection with the scriptures. Yet in later centuries the gold lettering of this word and the austere black binding have generated a sanctity quite immune to Paul's wise counsel to "prove all things." (I Thess. 5:21.)

The following from Hastings (Vol. IV, 833) gives the authority for Docetism in the apocryphal scriptures and also suggests the partisan sentiments that ruled the Council of Nicea:

> There are traces of Docetism in several apocryphal books that circulated for a time among early Christians. We have seen that Serapion of Antioch forbade the reading of the *Gospel of Peter* because it had been corrupted by Docetes. . . . The *Acts of John* (early 2nd cent.; cf. Euseb. *HE* iii. 25) exhibits the most pronounced form. At the Last Supper, St. John, leaning on Christ's breast, found it non-resisting (89, Hennecke, *NT Apokryphen*, Tubingen, 1904, p. 451); at the entombment, the body of Christ was at one moment apparently solid, at another it was "immaterial and incorporeal and like nothing" (93 *ib.* 452). The Crucifixion was only an appearance; at the same moment Christ appeared to John on the Mount of Olives and explained this (97 *ib.* 454). The *Acts of Peter* (cf. Euseb. iii. 2) has the statement, characteristic of one school of Docetism, that God sent His Son

> "*through* the Virgin Mary" (7 Hennecke, 399) . . . The *Acts of Andrew* is strongly Encratite; its Docetism appears in chapter 6 (Hennecke 466), where man is said to be "immaterial, holy, light," etc. In the *Acts of Thomas,* Docetism is less evident, but the usual Gnostic antithesis between matter and spirit is supposed throughout; Christ is spirit (Hennecke, 480-544). Only the *Acts of Paul* (*ib.* 369-383) seems free from any trace of this heresy.
>
> In many cases the Docetism of these apocryphal scriptures is latent rather than manifest, or it shows itself only in one or two sentences. For the rest they speak of our Lord in much the same tone as in Canonical books. This explains how they could be read in orthodox circles often without suspicion. On the other hand, they were rejected by authority (cf. Euseb. iii. 25) because of their heretical tendency, shown chiefly in the form of Docetism.

It was chiefly, then, because of their docetic teachings that the apocryphal books were ruled unfit for inclusion in the Bible. Except for this "defect," these Scriptures, it is said, "speak of our Lord in much the same tone as in Canonical books." Yet "they were rejected *by authority.*" By what authority? one must ask.

A few studious Christians of the intervening centuries have pressed such questions, concluding that the teachings of the Apocrypha, along with the views of their Gnostic authors and supporters, deserve equal respect with the canonical books. There is hardly a period in recorded history when these rejected scriptures, with their docetic teachings, have not found adherents. As the *Britannica* puts it:

> Docetic tendencies have also been developed in later periods of ecclesiastical history, as for example by the Priscillianists (the followers of Priscillian, who lived in Spain in the 4th century, and the first Christian put to death for heresy) and the Bogomils (10th century), and also since the Reformation by Jacob Boehme (German theosophist and mystic of the 17th century), Menno Simons (the 16th century originator of the Mennonites), and a small fraction of the Anabaptists (16th century).

Contributors to Hastings' *Encyclopedia,* however, doubt that the Priscillianists were Docetae; for in Volume IV (p. 836) he says:

> But the Cathari, Albigenses, and other medieval Manichaean sects adopted Docetism as part of their system. The Albigenses carried it so far that they taught that the Virgin Mary, St. Joseph, St. John, as well as our Lord Himself, were all angels in the appearance of men. In the year 1017 a Synod at Orleans condemned a number of heretics who denied the reality of the body of Christ.

> Pope Leo I. accuses the Monophysites of Docetism. There is something of this heresy in their system and in that of their predecessor Apollinaris, inasmuch as they taught that the body of Christ, absorbed in the Divinity, lost the natural qualities of human flesh. Julian of Halicarnassus and his followers, the Aphthartodoketai, held this view as their distinguishing theory. Muhammed adopted a Docetic view of the Crucifixion (Quran iii, 45). Some Anabaptists were Docetes. Lastly, various modern revivals of old heresies—theosophy and such like—have adopted Docetic ideas. Mrs. Eddy introduced a kind of Docetism as part of her "Christian Science."

Whether or not the Docetae were correct in their views respecting the nature of Jesus' body, there are certain reports concerning his life that deserve attention. Why, for example, has it been claimed that the Master did not gain birth in the usual way? Why was it, moreover, that when the women came to the sepulchre, "they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord"? (Luke 24:3.) Had he, as claimed by the Church, resurrected physically from death, or did some friends, perhaps, steal in and take the body away? Or could it have been, as maintained by the Docetae, that his body had been in fact an *illusion,* an appearance only seemingly real—of such nature that it could be dispersed at will by the Master, and made to disappear from view, or to pass through closed doors, if he chose, or exhibit all the characteristics of solidity? Such phenomena actually occurred, the scriptures imply, during his visit with the assembled disciples. (John 20:19-27.)

It is mainly upon the supposition that Jesus was a *physical* being who died a physical death, and was resurrected, that the Christian promise of immortality is built. It is upon the doctrine of bodily resurrection that millions of human beings place their hopes for survival. No matter where or when they may have died, says the Church—whether their bodies were buried, drowned, or cremated—when Judgment Day comes, all good Christians will be gathered up whole into heaven, where they will live forever. The fact that most of these remains will have long ago decomposed, their atoms returned into the reservoir of nature, seems to make no difference.

Countless people of all religions, or of none, feel that death does not end all. This feeling, according to Theosophy, is an intuition of the Soul, and it needs to be sustained. But how can this occur for those weighted down by belief in the dogma of bodily resurrection, by a teaching that is illogical and not even supported by scripture?

The tragic effects of this dogma can be seen in all Christian countries—where men yearning for evidences of their immortality, but gaining no help from the Church, either develop intense fear of death or turn their backs on religion altogether. "The atheist," said H. P. Blavatsky, "is the bastard child of the Church."

The dogma of bodily resurrection, we repeat, is unsupported by scripture. Though Paul says that "the dead shall be raised incorruptible" (I Cor. 15:52), why should we imagine that he refers to the worn-out and decaying corpse? John likewise taught that "the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice, and come forth," but is it not senseless to suppose that anything can be heard by the dead carcasses of men long ago decomposed? The docetic teaching, however conceived or applied—and it may have been applied by some of the early Christians with undue extravagance—forces men to think of their true being in terms of an immortal Ego, or Soul, which once inhabited the body. The verse most frequently cited by the Church in support of bodily resurrection is in Job 19:26, where it is stated that "though . . . the worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." The new Standard Revised Version, embodies some long-needed corrections, one of them being to this verse from Job. After comparison with the most ancient sources, it is now made to read: ". . . after my skin has been thus destroyed, then *without my flesh* I shall see God." (Italics ours.)

THE POWER OF IMAGES

WHEN the lower nature presents an idea or image that will cause one to act in a way not in accord with universal brotherhood, it should be realized that, unless firmly rejected, this image will return under cyclic law to plague one in the future. What is one then to do?

Most important, perhaps, is the realization that the impact, on return, can be modified if one now substitutes a more desirable object of thought. It is for the way returning ideas are received, not for their appearance, that one is immediately responsible. A man once consulted on this topic replied with an apt illustration: "I cannot prevent the birds from flying over my head, but I *can* prevent their making nests in my hair."

Mr. Judge has said that victory over evil thoughts becomes most practicable when they are grappled with on first appearance. He further counsels (in *Letters That Have Helped Me*): "The image of the Master is the best protection against lower influences; think of the Master as a living man within you." And Patanjali says, "Distractions may be combated by . . . the thought taking as its object someone devoid of passion—as, for instance, an ideally pure character." Thus by substituting another thought or image in place of the troublesome one, a beginning is made in establishing the habit of substitution, and eventually the control sought can be gained.

H. P. Blavatsky quotes the Arabian alchemist Abipili on this point:

> I admonish thee, whomsoever thou art that desirest to dive into the inmost parts of nature: if that thou seekest thou findest not *within thee,* thou wilt *never find it without thee.* If thou knowest not the excellency of thine own house, why dost thou seek after the excellency of other things? . . . O MAN, KNOW THYSELF! IN THEE IS HID THE TREASURE OF TREASURES. (*Isis Unveiled* II, 617.)

THE CHRISTIAN SCHEME

JESUS: *Various Views*

EXCEPT the kabalistic sects of the Essenes, the Nazarenes, the disciples of Simeon Ben Iochaï, and Hillel, neither the orthodox Jews nor the Galileans, believed or knew anything about the doctrine of *permutation*. And the Sadducees rejected even that of the resurrection. "But the author of this *restitutionis* was Mosah, our master, upon whom be peace! Who was the *revolutio* (transmigration) of Seth and Hebel, that he might cover the nudity of his Father Adam—*Primus,*" says the *Kabala*. Thus, Jesus hinting that John was the *revolutio,* or transmigration of Elias, seems to prove beyond any doubt the school to which he belonged.

Until the present day uninitiated Kabalists and Masons believe permutation to be synonymous with transmigration and metempsychosis. But they are as much mistaken in regard to the doctrine of the true Kabalists as to that of the Buddhists. But this doctrine of permutation, or *revolutio,* must be understood as a belief in reincarnation. That Moses was considered the transmigration of Abel and Seth does not imply that the Kabalists—those who were *initiated* at least—believed that the identical spirit of either of Adam's sons reappeared under the corporeal form of Moses. It only shows what was the mode of expression they used when hinting at one of the profoundest mysteries of the Oriental Gnosis, one of the most majestic articles of faith of the Secret Wisdom. It was purposely veiled so as to half conceal and half reveal the truth. It implied that Moses, like certain other god-like men, was believed to have reached the highest of all states on earth:—the rarest of all psychological phenomena, the perfect union of the immortal spirit with the terrestrial *duad* had occurred. The trinity was complete. A *god* was incarnate. But how rare such incarnations!

That expression, "Ye are gods," which, to our biblical students, is a mere abstraction, has for the kabalists a vital significance. Each immortal spirit that sheds its radiance upon a human being is a god —the Microcosmos of the Macrocosmos, part and parcel of the Unknown God, the First Cause of which it is a direct emanation.

NOTE.—"The Christian Scheme," begun in November, 1967, is collated from the works of H. P. Blavatsky. It recounts the historical background and early development of Christianity.

It is possessed of all the attributes of its parent source. Among these attributes are omniscience and omnipotence. Endowed with these, but yet unable to fully manifest them while in the body, during which time they are obscured, veiled, limited by the capabilities of physical nature, the thus divinely-inhabited man may tower far above his kind, evince a god-like wisdom, and display deific powers; for while the rest of mortals around him are but *overshadowed* by their divine SELF, with every chance given to them to become immortal hereafter, but no other security than their personal efforts to win the kingdom of heaven, the so chosen man has already become an immortal while yet on earth. His prize is secured. Henceforth he will live forever in eternal life.

It is the acceptation of this doctrine which caused the Gnostics to maintain that Jesus was a man overshadowed by the Christos or Messenger of Life. The early Nazarenes, who must be numbered among the Gnostic sects, believing that Jesus was a prophet, held, nevertheless, in relation to him the same doctrine of the divine "overshadowing," of certain "men of God," sent for the salvation of nations, and to recall them to the path of righteousness. Had not the Christians burdened themselves with the *Revelations* of a little nation, and accepted the Jehovah of Moses, the Gnostic ideas would never have been termed *heresies;* once relieved of their dogmatic exaggerations the world would have had a religious system based on pure Platonic philosophy, and surely something would then have been gained.

In the ideas of the Christians, Christ is but another name for Jesus. The philosophy of the Gnostics, the initiates, and hierophants understood it otherwise. The word Christos, like all Greek words, must be sought in its philological origin—the Sanskrit. In this latter language *Kris* means sacred, and the Hindu deity was named Chris-na (the pure or the sacred) from that. On the other hand, the Greek *Christos* bears several meanings, as anointed (pure oil, *chrism*) and others. In all languages, though the synonym of the word means pure or sacred essence, it is the first emanation of the invisible Godhead, manifesting itself tangibly in spirit. The Greek Logos, the Hebrew Messiah, the Latin Verbum, and the Hindu Viradj (the son) are identically the same; they represent an idea of collective entities—of flames detached from the one eternal center of light.

Thus, Christos, as a unity, is but an abstraction: a general idea

representing the collective aggregation of the numberless spirit-entities, which are the direct emanations of the infinite, invisible, incomprehensible FIRST CAUSE—the individual spirits of men, erroneously called the souls. They are the divine sons of God, of which some only overshadow mortal men—but this the majority—some remain forever planetary spirits, and some—the smaller and rare minority—unite themselves during life with some men. Such God-like beings as Gautama-Buddha, Jesus, Tissoo, Christna, and a few others had united themselves with their spirits permanently—hence, they became gods on earth. Others, such as Moses, Pythagoras, Apollonius, Plotinus, Confucius, Plato, Iamblichus, and some Christian saints, having at intervals been so united, have taken rank in history as demi-gods and leaders of mankind. When unburdened of their terrestrial tabernacles, their freed souls, henceforth united forever with their spirits, rejoin the whole shining host, which is bound together in one spiritual solidarity of thought and deed, and called "the anointed." Hence, the meaning of the Gnostics, who, by saying that "Christos" suffered spiritually for humanity, implied that his Divine Spirit suffered mostly.

Such, and far more elevating were the ideas of Marcion, the great "Heresiarch" of the second century, as he is termed by his opponents. He came to Rome toward the latter part of the half-century, from A.D. 139-142, according to Tertullian, Irenæus, Clemens, and most of his modern commentators, such as Bunsen, Tischendorf, Westcott, and many others. Credner and Schleiermacher agree as to his high and irreproachable personal character, his pure religious aspirations and elevated views. His influence must have been powerful, as we find Epiphanius writing more than two centuries later that in his time the followers of Marcion were to be found throughout the whole world.

The danger must have been pressing and great indeed, if we are to judge it to have been proportioned with the opprobrious epithets and vituperation heaped upon Marcion by the "Great African," that Patristic Cerberus, whom we find ever barking at the door of the Irenæan dogmas. We have but to open his celebrated refutation of Marcion's *Antitheses*, to acquaint ourselves with the *fine-fleur* of monkish abuse of the Christian school; an abuse so faithfully carried through the middle ages, to be renewed again in our present day—at the Vatican. "Now, then, ye hounds yelping at the God of Truth, whom the apostles cast out, to all your questions. These are the

bones of contention which ye gnaw," etc. "The poverty of the Great African's arguments keeps pace with his abuse," remarks the author of *Supernatural Religion*. "Their (the Father's) religious controversy bristles with misstatements, and is turbid with pious abuse. Tertullian was a master of his style, and the vehement vituperation with which he opens and often interlards his work against 'the impious and sacrilegious Marcion,' offers anything but a guarantee of fair and legitimate criticism."

How firm these two Fathers—Tertullian and Epiphanius—were on their theological ground, may be inferred from the curious fact that they intemperately both vehemently reproach "the beast" (Marcion) "with erasing passages from the Gospel of Luke which never were in Luke at all." "The lightness and inaccuracy," adds the critic, "with which Tertullian proceeds, are all the better illustrated by the fact that not only does he accuse Marcion falsely, but *he actually defines the motives* for which he expunged a passage *which never existed;* in the same chapter he also similarly accuses Marcion of erasing (from Luke) the saying that Christ has not come to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill them, and he actually repeats the charge on two other occasions. Epiphanius also commits the mistake of reproaching Marcion with omitting from Luke what is only found in Matthew."

Having so far shown the amount of reliance to be placed in the Patristic literature, and it being unanimously conceded by the great majority of biblical critics that what the Fathers fought for was not *truth,* but their own interpretations and unwarranted assertions,[1] we will now proceed to state what were the views of Marcion, whom Tertullian desired to annihilate as the most dangerous *heretic* of his day. If we are to believe Hilgenfeld, one of the greatest German

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[1] This author, vol. ii, p. 103, remarks with great justice of the "Heresiarch" Marcion, "whose high personal character exerted so powerful an influence upon his own time," that "it was the misfortune of Marcion to live in an age when Christianity had passed out of the pure morality of its infancy; when, untroubled by complicated questions of dogma, simple faith and pious enthusiasm had been the one great bond of Christian brotherhood, into a phase of ecclesiastical development in which religion was fast degenerating into theology, and complicated doctrines were rapidly assuming the rampant attitude which led to so much bitterness, persecution, and schism. In later times Marcion might have been honored as a reformer, in his own he was denounced as a heretic. Austere and ascetic in his opinions, he aimed at superhuman purity, and, although his clerical adversaries might scoff at his impracticable doctrines regarding marriage and the subjugation of the flesh, they have had their parallels amongst those whom the church has since most delighted to honor, and, at least, the whole tendency of his system was markedly towards the side of virtue." These statements are based upon Credner's "Beitrage," i, p. 40; cf. Neander; "Allg, K. G.," ii, p. 792 f.; Schleiermacher, Milman, etc., etc.

biblical critics, then "from the critical standing-point one must . . . consider the statements of the Fathers of the Church only as expressions of their *subjective view,* which itself requires proof."

We can do no better nor make a more correct statement of facts concerning Marcion than by quoting what our space permits from *Supernatural Religion,* the author of which bases his assertions on the evidence of the greatest critics, as well as on his own researches. He shows in the days of Marcion "two broad parties in the primitive Church"—one considering Christianity "a mere continuation of the law, and dwarfing it into an Israelitish institution, a narrow sect of Judaism"; the other representing the glad tidings "as the introduction of a new system, applicable to all, and supplanting the Mosaic dispensation of the law by a universal dispensation of grace." These two parties, he adds, "were popularly represented in the early Church, by the two apostles Peter and Paul, and their antagonism is faintly revealed in the *Epistle to the Galatians.*"

But, on the other hand, this antagonism is very *strongly* marked in the "Clementine Homilies," in which Peter unequivocally denies that Paul, whom he calls Simon the Magician, has ever had a *vision* of Christ, and calls him "an enemy." Canon Westcott says: "There can be no doubt that St. Paul is referred to as 'the enemy' " ("On the Canon," p. 252, note 2; *Supernatural Religion,* vol. ii., p. 35). But this antagonism, which rages unto the present day, we find even in St. Paul's "Epistles." What can be more energetic than such like sentences: "Such are *false* apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. . . . I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostle" (II Cor. 11.). "Paul, an apostle *not of men,* neither by man, but by Jesus Christ *and* God the Father, who raised him from the dead . . . but there be some that trouble you, and *would pervert* the Gospel of Christ . . . *false brethren.* . . . When Peter came to Antioch I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, *he did eat* with the Gentiles, but when they were come he withdrew, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled . . . insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their *dissimulation,*" etc., etc., (Gal. i. and ii.). On the other hand, we find Peter in the *Homilies,* indulging in various complaints which, although alleged to be addressed to Simon Magus, are evidently all direct answers to the above-quoted sentences from the Pauline Epistles, and *cannot* have anything to do with Simon. So,

for instance, Peter said: "For some among the Gentiles have rejected my lawful preaching, and accepted certain *lawless* and *foolish* teaching of the hostile men (enemy)"—Epist. of Peter to James, §2. He says further: "Simon (Paul) . . . who came before me to the Gentiles . . . and I have followed him as light upon darkness, as knowledge upon ignorance, as health upon disease" (*Homil.,* ii, 17). Still further, he calls him *Death* and a *deceiver* (*Ibid.,* ii, 18). He warns the Gentiles that "our Lord and *Prophet* (*?*) (*Jesus*) announced that he would send from among his followers, apostles to *deceive.* "Therefore, above all, remember to avoid every apostle, or teacher, or prophet, who first does not accurately compare his teaching with that of James, called the brother of our Lord" (see the difference between Paul and James on *faith,* Epist. to Hebrews, 11-12, and Epist. of James, 2). "Lest the Evil One should send a false preacher . . . as he has sent to us Simon (?) preaching a counterfeit of truth in the name of our Lord, and disseminating error" (*Hom.* xi., 35; see above quotation from Gal. 1:5). He then denies Paul's assertion, in the following words: "If, therefore, our Jesus indeed appeared in a vision to you, it was only as an irritated adversary. . . . But how can any one through visions become wise in teaching? And if you say, 'it is possible,' then I ask, wherefore did the Teacher remain for a whole year and discourse to those who were attentive? And how can *we believe your story that he appeared to you?* And in what manner did he appear to you, when you hold opinions contrary to his teaching? . . . For you now set yourself up against me, who am a *firm rock, the foundation of the Church.* If you were not an opponent, you would not calumniate me, you would not revile my teaching . . . (circumcision?) in order that, in declaring what I have myself heard from the Lord, I may not be believed, as though *I were condemned.* . . . But if you say that I am condemned, you blame God who revealed Christ to me." "This last phrase," observes the author of *Supernatural Religion,* " 'if you say that I am condemned,' is an evident allusion to Galat. 2:11, 'I withstood him to the face, because he was condemned' " (*Supernatural Religion,* p. 37). "There cannot be a doubt," adds the just-quoted author, "that the Apostle Paul is attacked in this religious romance as the great enemy of the true faith, under the hated name of Simon the Magician, whom Peter follows everywhere for the purpose of unmasking and confuting him" (p. 34). And if so, then we must believe that it was St. Paul who broke his legs in Rome when flying

in the air.

Marcion, who recognized no other Gospels than a few Epistles of Paul, who rejected totally the anthropomorphism of the Old Testament, and drew a distinct line of demarcation between the old Judaism and Christianity, viewed Jesus neither as a King, Messiah of the Jews, nor the son of David, who was in any way connected with the law or prophets, "but a divine being sent to reveal to man a spiritual religion, wholly new, and a God of goodness and grace hitherto unknown." The "Lord God" of the Jews in his eyes, the Creator (Demiurgos), was totally different and distinct from the Deity who sent Jesus to reveal the divine truth and preach the glad tidings, to bring reconciliation and salvation to all. The mission of Jesus—according to Marcion—was to abrogate the Jewish "Lord," who "was opposed to the God and Father of Jesus Christ as *matter is to spirit, impurity to purity.*"

Was Marcion so far wrong? Was it blasphemy, or was it intuition, divine inspiration in him to express that which every honest heart yearning for truth, more or less feels and acknowledges? If in his sincere desire to establish a purely spiritual religion, a universal faith based on unadulterated truth, he found it necessary to make of Christianity an entirely new and separate system from that of Judaism, did not Marcion have the very words of Christ for his authority? "No man putteth a piece of new cloth into an old garment . . . for the rent is made worse. . . . Neither do men put new wine into old bottles, else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish; but *they put new wine into new bottles,* and both are preserved." In what particular does the jealous, wrathful, revengeful God of Israel resemble the unknown deity, the God of mercy preached by Jesus;—*his* Father who is in Heaven, and the Father of all humanity? This Father alone is the God of spirit and purity, and, to compare Him with the subordinate and capricious Sinaitic Deity is an error. Did Jesus ever pronounce the name of Jehovah? Did he ever place *his* Father in contrast with this severe and cruel Judge; his God of mercy, love, and justice, with the Jewish genius of retaliation? Never! From that memorable day when he preached his Sermon on the Mount, an immeasurable void opened between his God and that other deity who fulminated his commands from that other mount—Sinai. The language of Jesus is unequivocal; it implies not only rebellion but defiance of the Mosaic "Lord God." "Ye have heard," he tells us, "that it hath been said, an eye

for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; but *I say* unto you, That ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. Ye have heard that it hath been said [by the same "Lord God" on Sinai], Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But *I say* unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." (Matthew v.)

If the Mosaic "Lord God" was the only living God, and Jesus His only Son, how account for the rebellious language of the latter? Without hesitation or qualification he sweeps away the Jewish *lex talionis* and substitutes for it the law of charity and self-denial. If the Old Testament is divine revelation, how can the New Testament be? Are we required to believe and worship a Deity who contradicts himself every few hundred years? Was Moses inspired, or was Jesus *not* the son of God? This is a dilemma from which the theologians are bound to rescue us. It is from this very dilemma that the Gnostics endeavored to snatch the budding Christianity.

Justice has been waiting nineteen centuries for intelligent commentators to appreciate this difference between the orthodox Tertullian and the Gnostic Marcion.

The Thread of Existence

The life we live is not the gift of a god, but merely an episode in a sequence of different lives, an installment in an endless series. We have lived before, we shall live again; from birth to the death which follows it, from death to another birth, the thread of our personal existence runs on, linking each life to the next.

—Andre Migot: *Tibetan Marches*

on the lookout

The Living Earth

An article in *Caltech News* for June reflects the changing opinions of modern geologists on the age of the earth and the constitution of its surface:

> Not long ago scientists would have little to do with people who, looking at a map, suggested that South America and Africa might have been joined at one time. Now, said Don Anderson, director of Caltech's Seismological Laboratory, geologists have taken a look at some special maps of their own and come up with similar conclusions.
>
> Anderson said that many of the various earth sciences—seismology, paleontology, climatology, geophysics, geochemistry, geomorphology—are now fitting together into one overall theory of the tectonics of the earth. It appears, he said, that the crust of the earth is composed of a few major blocks that are continually moving against one another. The driving forces seem to come from deep within the earth's mantle, and appear along the several mid-ocean rises where molten material rises and solidifies as it nears the surface.

Magnetic Field Activities

> As new crust forms along the rises, the sea floor spreads (at between one and ten centimeters per year), causing the massive continent-size blocks to push against each other like paving stones. At the block interfaces are seismic zones, mountain-building, and deep ocean trenches where old crustal material is returning to the mantle. These block boundaries are frequently offset by faults, such as California's San Andreas—a long transform fault that offsets the East Pacific rise. Other, less visible offsetting faults can be mapped from the record of earthquakes along them.
>
> Much of the new theory has come from data about magnetic properties of deep-sea rocks, said Anderson. As new crustal material solidifies along the rises, magnetic materials in it align themselves with the earth's magnetic field. Because the earth's magnetic polarity periodically reverses (making the North Pole the South Pole), a series of magnetic "stripes" can be detected in rocks of varying ages laid out along the ocean floor. These stripes can be dated and so correlated all over the globe. By

matching up stripes of similar ages, geologists have been able to reconstruct the positions of the continents at past times. The reconstructions indicate that millions of years ago there were one or, perhaps, two "precontinents," with the Americas, Africa, Europe, and Greenland making up the major one.

Epidemics of Change

The process of changing scientific opinion may be, like the alternation of the poles, an intermittent and long-range affair, affected by many fields of investigation. The classic work on the subject of former continents is, of course, Donnelly's *Atlantis,* long considered as merely interesting science-fiction and ignored by serious scientists. But in 1949 a revised edition appeared with new material added, the result of explorations with modern instruments. This material supports many of Donnelly's original claims. Meanwhile, in 1945, Dr. William Herbert Hobbs, professor emeritus of geology at the University of Michigan, reported in the *Proceedings* of the American Philosophical Society:

> The entire rim of the Pacific is seismically active in a continuous mountain-building process, and this includes the coasts of the Americas. The San Francisco earthquake of 1906 was part of this process. The Pacific basin had been seismically quiet for a long time until 1906-7, when a series of quakes and volcanic eruptions burst out like an epidemic. Sixteen years later, 1922-25, another series of upheavals started. About ten years later, 1931-33, there were more adjustments. The starting time, 1938, of the next series which erupted in 1943 and the earthquake in Japan of last year probably belonged to the next series, which started after an interval of five years. The decreasing time interval between the starting of each series of earthquakes may be only a coincidence.

Other Factors

Earlier John J. O'Neill, science editor of the New York *Herald-Tribune,* had noted the fact that for more than a century the annual mean temperatures in northeastern United States have been growing warmer, chiefly the result of long-range decrease in winter temperatures, probably caused, according to Mr. O'Neill, by shifts in circulating air currents. Mr. O'Neill speculated on the significance of these facts (in the *Herald-Tribune* for Aug. 27, 1944):

> The weather maps reveal a change which may be of tremendous importance in so far as it may be an indication that the North Pole ice cap is in process of moving to some other part of the earth.

> The atmospheric mechanism which has produced the ice barrens of Greenland and the Arctic regions recently has disappeared from the weather map. The chief indicator of the ice-making process was the extensive permanent high-pressure area centered over Greenland, with smaller satellite areas north of Alaska and the Siberian region. . . .

Writing in the *Social Frontier* for May, 1939, Raymond H. Wheeler drew some suggestive parallels between climatic changes and cultural patterns, although the conclusion that weather alterations are fundamentally responsible for extensive cultural changes is hardly justified in the cosmology of *The Secret Doctrine*. Yet such scientists seem headed toward a synthesis of numerous branches of research relating to the study of the earth, all contributing to the view of the earth as a living organism.

Cultural Links

Mr. Anderson's report of geological reconstruction of former continents, including the Americas, is supported by cultural evidence linking the Mayas with the Eastern hemisphere. In her column in the *World* for Oct. 16, 1929, Elsie McCormick referred to accumulating evidence of a connection between the Mayas and the Orient. There has never been any raw jade discovered in America, but Mayan cities abound with jade ornaments. There is no evidence of elephants having lived in Central America, but they appear in ceramics and on ornaments. Le Plongeon claimed to have found Masonic symbols and also references to initiations resembling those of the Egyptian Isis.

Past and Future

In his article "On the Future: A Few Reflections" (THEOSOPHY 4:401), Mr. Judge refers to correlative material in *The Secret Doctrine* on the subject of changes in the earth's habitable lands:

> From a survey of the book, digging in notes and culling from the text here and there, the conclusion is irresistible that, although the present America is not the actual Continent *as it is to be*, it is a portion of it; and certainly is now the nursery for the race that will in the future occupy the *sixth* Continent, which for the sixth Great Root-Race will emerge from the waters. Where? Perhaps when the present America has been split up by tremendous cataclysms, leaving here and there large pieces on its western side, it is in the Pacific Ocean that the great mass of the new one will come up from the long sleep below the sea. Rightly then will the great far western ocean have been named *Pacific*,

> for that Race will not be given to contest nor hear of wars or rumours of war, since it will be too near the seventh, whose mission it must be to attain to the consummation, to seize and hold the Holy Grail.

Elsewhere in the same article Mr. Judge suggests that the American land masses are not for the first time the habitation of civilizations: "These two continents were evidently the seats of ancient races and not the habitat of wild undeveloped men. The red man of the Northern one has all the appearance and beliefs of a once great race." And concerning the British Isles, "Did H.P.B. only joke when she wrote in her book that Ireland is an ancient Atlantean remnant, and England a younger Isle, whose rising from the sea was watched by wise men from Erin's shore?"

Continental Prehistory

H. P. Blavatsky attributes to the Egyptians and especially the ancient Hindus detailed knowledge of these "precontinents," which geologists are just beginning to think included the "Americas, Africa, Europe and Greenland." She quotes nineteenth-century authorities who showed that the Zodiacs of the Egyptians spanned three and a half sidereal years, or about 87,000 solar years, while the records of the Hindus extend back almost thirty-three sidereal years, or 850,000 years. *The Secret Doctrine* delineates the extent of ancient land masses in this way:

> The sinking and transformation of Lemuria beginning nearly at the Arctic Circle (Norway), the Third Race ended its career in Lanka, or rather on that which became Lanka with the Atlanteans. The small remnant now known as Ceylon is the Northern highland of ancient Lanka, while the enormous island of that name was, in the Lemurian period, the gigantic continent described a few pages back. As a MASTER says (see *"Esoteric Buddhism,"* p. 65):—"Why should not your geologists bear in mind that under the continents explored and fathomed by them . . . there may be hidden, deep in the fathomless, or rather unfathomed ocean beds, other and far older continents whose strata have never been geologically explored; and that they may some day upset entirely their present theories? Why not admit that our present continents have, like Lemuria and Atlantis, been several times already submerged, and had the time to re-appear again and bear their new groups of mankind and civilisations; and that at the first great geological upheaval at the next cataclysm, in the series of periodical cataclysms that occur from the beginning to the end of every Round, our already autopsized continents will go down and the Lemurias and Atlantises come

up again?"

Not the *same* identical continents, of course.

Cradle of the Third Race

But here an explanation is needed. No confusion need arise as regards the postulation of a Northern "Lemuria." The prolongation of that great continent into the North Atlantic Ocean is in no way subversive of the opinions so widely held as to the site of the lost Atlantis, and one corroborates the other. It must be noted that the Lemuria, which served as the cradle of the Third Root-Race, not only embraced a vast area in the Pacific and Indian Oceans, but extended in the shape of a horseshoe past Madagascar, round "South Africa" (then a mere fragment in process of formation), through the Atlantic up to Norway. The great *English fresh-water deposit called the Wealden—which every geologist regards as the mouth of a former great river—is the bed of the main stream which drained Northern Lemuria in the Secondary Age.*

Submarine "Horse-Shoe"

The former reality of this river is a fact of science—will its votaries acknowledge the necessity of accepting the Secondary-age Northen Lemuria, which their data demand? Professor Berthold Seeman not only accepted the reality of such a mighty continent, but regarded *Australia and Europe as formerly portions of one continent*—thus corroborating the whole "horse-shoe" doctrine already enunciated. No more striking confirmation of our position could be given, than the fact that the ELEVATED RIDGE in the Atlantic basin, 9,000 feet in height, which runs for some two or three thousand miles southwards from a point near the British Islands, first slopes towards South America, then *shifts almost at right angles* to proceed in a SOUTH-EASTERLY *line toward the African coast,* whence it runs on southward to Tristan d'Acunha. This ridge is a remnant of an Atlantic continent, and, could it be traced further, would establish the reality of a submarine horse-shoe junction with a former continent in the Indian Ocean. (Cf. *chart adapted from the "Challenger" and "Dolphin" soundings in Mr. Donnelly's "Atlantis, the Antediluvian World," p. 47.*) (*S.D.* II, 332-33.)

The Shape of Ancient Lands

Elsewhere in *The Secret Doctrine* Madame Blavatsky shows from ancient Hindu sacred literature that knowledge of the periodic movement of the poles is by no means new and, furthermore, that it is a matter of some subtlety:

In the Puranas every reference to the North of Meru is connected with that primeval Eldorado, now the North Polar region;

which, when the magnolia blossomed there where now we see an unexplored endless desert of ice, was then a continent again. Science speaks of an ancient continent which stretched from Spitzbergen down to the Straits of Dover. The Secret Doctrine teaches that, in the earliest geological periods, these regions formed a horse-shoe-like continent, whose one end, the Eastern, far more northward than North Cornwall, included Greenland, and the other contained Behring Straits as an inland piece of ground, and descended southward in its natural trend down to the British Isles, which in those days must have been right under the lower curve of the semi-circle. This continent was raised simultaneously with the submersion of the equatorial portions of Lemuria. Ages later, some of the Lemurian remains reappeared again on the face of the Oceans. Therefore, though it can be said without departing from truth that Atlantis is included in the Seven great insular continents, since the Fourth Race Atlanteans got some of the Lemurian relics, and, settling on the islands, included them among *their* lands and continents, yet a difference should be made and an explanation given, once that a fuller and more accurate account is attempted, as in the present work (*S.D.* II, 326).

"Eternal Land"

The whole globe is convulsed periodically; and has been so convulsed, since the appearance of the First Race, four times. Yet, though the whole face of the Earth was transformed thereby each time, the conformation of the arctic and antarctic poles has but little altered. The polar lands unite and break off from each other into islands and peninsulas, yet remain ever the same. Therefore northern Asia is called the "eternal or perpetual land," and the Antarctic the "ever living" and "the concealed"; while the Mediterranean, Atlantic, Pacific and other regions disappear and reappear in turn, into and above the great waters. (*S.D.* II, 776.)

Instinct of the Lemmings

The New York Times for May 7 reports that two scientists believe they have isolated a substance in the bloodstream of lemmings (small arctic animals), which acts as a sort of anti-freeze during the arctic winter, but which attacks their nervous system after a period of warm weather, causing fatalities on a mass scale. It is also believed that this process may account for their periodical and inexplicable final plunge in large numbers off the cliffs of Norway into the sea. However, H.P.B. quotes a nineteenth-century writer on the migration of the lemmings, suggesting another explanation:

". . . The submerged continent of LEMURIA, in what is now the Indian Ocean, *is considered to afford an explanation of many difficulties in the distribution of organic life,* and, I think, the existence of a MIOCENE ATLANTIS will be found to have a *strong elucidative bearing on subjects of greater interest* [Truly so!] than the migration of the lemming. At all events, if it can be shown that land existed in former ages where the North Atlantic now rolls, not only is a motive found for these apparently suicidal migrations, but also a strong collateral proof that what we call instincts are but the blind and sometimes even prejudicial inheritance of previously acquired experiences."

(At certain periods, we learn, multitudes of these animals swim to sea and perish. Coming, as they do, from all parts of Norway, the powerful instinct which survives throughout ages as an inheritance from their progenitors impels them to seek a continent, once existing but now submerged beneath the ocean, and to court a watery grave.) (*S.D.* II, 782.)

Geological Evidence

Oceanographers working under the direction of Bruce C. Heezen, of the Dohorty Geological Observatory of Columbia University, have dredged up from the floor of the Caribbean Sea rocks of a kind heretofore found only on continental land masses. According to Dr. Heezen (*Dateline in Science,* April 4):

In the nearly 100 years since dredging became common in the world's oceans, . . . this recovered rock represents the first documented exception to a fundamental precept of geology: that light-colored granitic, or acid igneous rocks exist only on the continents, and that the earth's relative thin crust beneath the sea consists of heavier, dark basaltic rocks.

Dr. Heezen believes that these samples indicate the presence on the ocean floor of land submerged millions of years ago. Further evidence is the limestone dredged up containing fossilized coral and other sea animals known only to grow in shallow waters.

Firewalking in Bora Bora

Saturday Review for July 12 presents the experience of G. M. Feigen, San Francisco surgeon who participated in a firewalk on the island of Bora Bora, 120 miles northwest of Papeete. Dr. Feigen was companion to R. Buckminster Fuller, who, according to the surgeon, "has contacts at some of this planet's most far-flung places." The priest of a nearby island had consented to bring his firewalking troupe to Bora Bora as a favor to Fuller. The fire bed was prepared with white-hot coals covered by clean flat rocks which

glowed red. A coconut leaf thrown on the rocks at once flared into flames. The ceremony began with a short Christian prayer, followed by a Tahitian supplication asking the favor of the gods of the wind, the trees, the water, and the plants. Dr. Feigen relates:

> The walk began. The couples stepped onto the rocks. They moved rhythmically and confidently, keeping their feet flat against the rocks. There was no special path. There was no sign of pain. As they stepped off the firebed, they resumed their former positions. They seemed serene and composed.

Strange Impulse

The priest, Tanetoa, then welcomed the visitors and invited them to join the ceremony. Dr. Feigen responded:

> I suddenly found myself reaching down to take off my sneakers and socks. Some lingering remnant of my own culture led me absently to put on my glasses. Tanetoa greeted me, blessed me, and I felt myself grasping the palm of one of the initiates as he helped me step onto the firebed. From my legs up, I was aware of a frighteningly intense, though bearable, heat; my legs and feet felt cold. I moved along steadily, looking down, unaware of any special pathway. Unluckily, about a third of the way across, I stepped on a hot cinder which the sweepers had missed. I raised my foot instinctively and felt a momentary burning pain under my arch. I kept on, step by step. The rock surfaces felt like sandpaper and made my feet tingle. I saw no one. At last I had stopped reasoning! I stepped off as if awakening from sleep; then I recognized Fuller. "Bring me some water," I said, "and I'll turn it into wine!"

The firewalk, Feigen says, "practiced at only four locations in the Pacific, is rarely done because the religious pressure for performing the ritual has diminished with time and sectarian adulteration." He does not elaborate. In the *Theosophist* (IV, 280), H. P. Blavatsky told of mediums able to handle burning coals and walk through beds of blazing fire:

> The explanation . . . is that the fire-proof individual is a medium for these fire elementals, and contains in himself an unusual proportion of Salamandrine properties, the result of an abnormal combination of elemental forces in his foetal development. Normally, a human being contains the elementals of all the four kingdoms in almost equal proportions, any slight preponderance of one or the other determining the so-called "temperament."

Other reports of firewalking will be found in THEOSOPHY 14:573; 15:284; 22:527; and 25:431. In one of these accounts it is said

that "bystanders who choose to go through with the celebrators come out without discomfort, though if they brave the heat sufficiently to touch the stones at the edge of the pit, with a finger, they will find themselves nicely burned." A photograph of Dr. Feigen's exploit shows that one of the islander firewalkers held his hand as they walked the super-heated strip of stones.

"As Above, So Below"

A report in the Los Angeles *Times* (July 15, 1968) describes researches by Arnold B. and Mila Scheibel, of the Brain Research Institute at the University of California in Los Angeles. While their work is said to aim at accounting for brain function on purely physiological grounds, the report made by the *Times* Medical Editor, Harry Nelson, gives a somewhat different impression. He remarks, for example, that "as a whole organ the human brain is so complex that a billion computers of the most advanced design could not equal its capacities." This complexity leads Dr. Scheibel to say: "We now have hope that there are enough parts to account for things as complex as an appreciation of Mozart." Well, the parts are doubtless there, but brain parts do not make a Mozart, or even an appreciation of him. And you don't ever hear the symphony score from a study of the instruments in the orchestra, no matter how expert you become in the plumbing of the brass section or the acoustics of the hall. These researchers are nonetheless becoming very familiar with the "so below" situation, and some day, no doubt, they will reverse the maxim and begin to tell us about the "As above" realities lying behind what they are finding out.

Can it Be?

An editorial in the *Times* of India (Jan. 5, 1969), brings to light experiments in the space technology of 3,000 years ago. An ancient treatise in Sanskrit, detailing the manufacture of moon rockets, is said to have been seized by the Chinese, who apparently are not averse to consulting ancient scientists regarding their space program. Another old work deals extensively with the problem of weightlessness. "There are treatises," the editorial says, "which dwell at length on the secrets of laghima or the 'power to become weightless attained by developing within each cell of the human body a centrifugal force as strong as the force of gravity contained in the world'."